Dudek has conducted an evaluation to determine the presence and potential impacts to biological resources associated with the proposed San Diego State University (SDSU) Engineering and Interdisciplinary Sciences Building project (proposed project), located in San Diego, California. This technical memorandum provides the results of the biological resources evaluation.

1 PROJECT LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The proposed project site is located on the SDSU main campus, within the College Area of the City of San Diego, San Diego County, California (see Figure 1, Regional Map, and Figure 2, Vicinity Map). The proposed project would be located in the northeastern portion of the main SDSU campus (see Figure 3, Project Area Map).

SDSU proposes to construct a new, five-story building (four levels above grade and one subterraneaen level) for the College of Engineering and Interdisciplinary Sciences. The new building would be referred to as the “Engineering and Interdisciplinary Sciences Building.” The need for the building stems from outdated facilities and growth in enrollment in the engineering disciplines. SDSU is also interested in growing its research program, particularly through interdisciplinary projects that bring the sciences and engineering together. The new building will provide SDSU with state-of-the-art research facilities to attract significant research projects and funding.
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The new building would be located to the south of the existing Engineering Building and would take the place of the existing Engineering Lab and Industrial Technology buildings on the main campus of SDSU (see Figures 1–3). Development of the new building would include the following components, which are collectively referred to as the “proposed project”:

- Demolition of the existing Engineering Lab and Industrial Technology buildings (during construction, the occupants of the existing Engineering Lab and Industrial Technology buildings would be temporarily relocated to various buildings on campus).
- Construction of the new Engineering and Interdisciplinary Sciences Building and new landscaped quadrangle for the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) disciplines.
- Occupancy and operation of the new building.
- Modification of the existing Engineering Building, which is located to the north of the proposed new building site, to connect the existing Engineering Building to the new building on one or more floors (see Figure 3).
- Demolition of the Quonset Hut (see Figure 3).
- Demolition of the CAM Labs Building (see Figure 3).

The target completion date for occupancy and operational use of the new Engineering and Interdisciplinary Sciences Building is January (spring semester) 2018.

2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

In my capacity as a staff biologist, I visited the site of the proposed project on February 17, 2015, to evaluate on-site and adjacent biological resources. On this visit, I observed that the proposed project site consists entirely of ornamental landscaping and developed land. Additionally, the general vicinity surrounding the project site also is developed, primarily with academic land uses. SDSU buildings are located to the north of the site. Existing campus buildings and associated roadways and walkways are located south and west of the site. Finally, campus buildings and ornamental vegetation are located to the east of the project site.

While on site I observed the following wildlife species: house finch (*Haemorhous mexicanus*), raven (*Corvus corax*), yellow-rumped warbler (*Setophaga coronata*), and Anna’s hummingbird (*Calypte anna*). I observed four inactive nests within the eves of the on-site buildings. It is likely these nests were established or used by black phoebe (*Sayornis nigricans*) or mourning dove (*Zenaida macroura*) during previous years.
3 CONCLUSIONS

Based on my observations of the project site, I have made the following determinations related to the biological resource questions found in Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines:

1. Would the project have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive or special status species in local or regional plans, policies or regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game\(^1\) or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

No candidate, sensitive, or special-status species identified by local or regional plans, policies or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (referred to as “special-status species”) were observed during the biological field investigation on February 17, 2015. No habitat for special-status species is present on the project site.

2. Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

Based on the February 17, 2015, biological field investigation, there are no riparian habitats or other sensitive natural communities identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service present on the project site. No impacts to riparian or other sensitive natural communities will result from the proposed project.

3. Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption or other means?

The proposed project would not have a substantially adverse effect on federally protected wetlands. The site is located in an urban setting and is currently developed, and there are no jurisdictional waters of the United States, including wetlands, on or near the project.

\(^1\) Effective January 1, 2013, the California Department of Fish and Game changed its name to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. The original agency name has been retained in the criteria questions for consistency with Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines.
site. No impacts to federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act will result from the proposed project.

4. Would the project interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?

The site is located in an urban setting and is fully developed. However, there are ornamental trees and shrubs that may provide suitable nesting habitat for urban-adapted birds. Further, during the February 17, 2015, site visit, there was evidence of bird nests in building eves. Removal of breeding habitat or disruption to nests could occur if on-site ornamental vegetation or buildings are removed, which may result in direct impacts to breeding birds.

Additionally, breeding birds can be affected by short-term construction-related noise, which can result in the disruption of foraging, nesting, and reproductive activities. Because the project may result in short-term construction-related noise in close proximity to breeding birds, impacts may occur; therefore, the following mitigation is provided:

**BIO-1** CSU/SDSU, or its designee, shall conduct a pre-construction nesting bird survey prior to ground-disturbing construction activities, or the removal of on-site vegetation or building eaves. If any nesting birds are found during these surveys, a 300-foot buffer (or a buffer deemed appropriate by a qualified biologist) shall be established around the nest where no construction activities can occur until the young have fledged. Once the young have fledged, construction activities can resume without the buffer.

With implementation of the above mitigation measure, any potential impacts would be reduced to less than significant.

5. Would the project conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?

The City of San Diego has a Tree Protection Policy that regulates the removal of designated tree resources that meet certain criteria (landmark tree, heritage tree, parkway resource tree, or preservation grove). None of the trees on the project site meet these criteria. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources. No impacts would result.
6. Would the project conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Communities Conservation Plan or other approved local, regional or state habitat conservation plan?

The City of San Diego is participant in the San Diego Multi-Species Conservation Program and has therefore adopted a Subarea Plan that implements the program within the jurisdictional limits of the City of San Diego. Although SDSU is not a “permittee” under this umbrella plan/Subarea Plan, the proposed project is within the Subarea Plan boundary but is not within the Multi-Habitat Planning Area. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with conservation planning outlined in any formal habitat conservation plans or natural community conservation plans. No impacts would result.

Sincerely,

Paul Lemons
Biologist
Figure 1
Regional Map

SDSU Engineering and Interdisciplinary Sciences Building Project
Figure 2
Vicinity Map

SDSU Engineering and Interdisciplinary Sciences Building Project

Project Location
SDSU Campus Boundary

AERIAL SOURCE: BING MAPPING SERVICE
SDSU Engineering and Interdisciplinary Sciences Building Project

Figure 3
Project Area Map